

February 22, 2022

Appropriations Committee Public Hearing on UConn's Budget Testimony

Hello, my name is Sabrina Uva. I am from Stamford, Connecticut, and I am the President of the Student Government Association at the University of Connecticut - Stamford Campus. I am a Senior majoring in Human Development and Family Sciences with Honors and minors in Psychology and Gerontology. I have gained research experience in my major and as a full-time Product Manager at the UConn Werth Institute Stamford Startup Studio, which is an entrepreneurial cooperative education experience.

I would like to thank the General Assembly and the Committee members for supporting the University of Connecticut and holding this hearing today. As I approach my final semester as an undergraduate student at UConn, I would like time to reflect on my academic and professional experiences that highlight the importance of access to high-quality and affordable education.

About 4 years ago, I started my journey at UConn Stamford. I chose this campus because of the vibrant community, the enrichment programs, and the opportunities to build skills for the workforce. As I got acquainted at the Stamford campus, I got involved in leading various student-focused initiatives through a service organization, Huskies for Charity, and Student Government Association. Some of my projects include working with State Representatives to promote menstrual equity, hosting clothing drives for hundreds of students, and conducting research on the effects of anti-racism engagement across all UConn campuses. My passion for civic engagement and my humanistic perspective contributed to the development of my entrepreneurial mindset.

During the coronavirus pandemic, I took a class online called The Entrepreneurial Journey that explored social problems through a virtual reality headset. This class was made accessible to all majors, including my social science background. I became interested in the scaling impact in the community by the use of emerging technology through a project that explored wellness-based practices across cultures using Youtube 360 videos. Taking a class in virtual reality prepared me to utilize emerging technology in my projects at the Stamford Startup Studio where I built management skills leading sprints and technology skills analyzing data from the Stamford community. My experience as a social science researcher gaining technology and entrepreneurial skills is a reflection of UConn's commitment to equipping students with high-quality education and the top transferable skills needed for the workforce.

Investing in UConn means investing in the next generation of talent for Connecticut's workforce. As I approach post-graduation opportunities, I feel equipped to apply for a competitive position or pursue an advanced degree given the extensive leadership, research, and work experience I have gained at UConn Stamford. I recently have been accepted into a P.h.D program at UConn, Storrs where I would continue to build my technical skills in research. Upon completion of the program, I aim to establish a human-centered and technology-driven career in the Stamford, Connecticut area. Investing in UConn is critical to ensure access to high-quality and affordable education to build the next generation of talent in Connecticut.